



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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August 19, 2008

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT: APPROVAL OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL  
REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRELIMINARY ACTION PLAN FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION AT PROBATION CAMPS AND JUVENILE HALLS  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The Los Angeles County Probation Department, along with the members of the Education Reform Committee, is requesting that your Board approve the Comprehensive Educational Reform Recommendations and Action Plan; funding for three (3) ordinance and budgeted positions; and a sole source contract with The Resource Company (TRC) in an effort to establish a more effective educational system for minors within the juvenile halls and camps.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve the 35 recommendations identified in the attached Comprehensive Education Reform Report (Attachment I) and the accompanying short-term, preliminary implementation action plan (Attachment II) that were developed by the Comprehensive Education Reform Committee.
2. Approve the attached Appropriation Adjustment transferring a total of \$621,000 (\$321,000 in ongoing salaries and employee benefits; \$20,000 in ongoing services and supplies; and \$280,000 in one-time services and supplies) to the Probation Department's operating budget to provide the appropriation necessary to effectively implement the recommendations outlined in the report.

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

3. Authorize the Chief Probation Officer to fill one (1) Senior Probation Director or equivalent MAPP Tier II S12 level position; one (1) Senior Secretary III; and one (1) Program Analyst, Probation pursuant to Section 6.06.020 of the County Code, and subject to allocation by the Chief Executive Office. The \$321,000 in ongoing funding for these positions is contained in the above referenced Appropriation Adjustment.
4. Authorize the Chief Probation Officer to negotiate and execute a one-year sole source agreement with The Resources Company, with the option to extend the contract term on a month to month basis not to exceed six months, contingent upon available funding and approval as to form by County Counsel. The \$280,000 one-time cost of this contract is included in the above referenced Appropriation Adjustment.
5. Delegate authority to the Chief Probation Officer to prepare and execute modifications necessary to the resulting TRC contract for any decreases or increases not to exceed 10 percent of the contract amount upon approval as to form by County Counsel. The Chief Probation Officer will notify the CEO in writing within ten business days after execution.

#### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

The purpose of the recommended actions is to provide a more effective educational system for youth at the Probation Department's juvenile halls and camps, with enhanced opportunities to become better engaged in their education. The Comprehensive Educational Reform Report identifies a planned vision of such a system and includes multiple pathways that would enable youth and emerging adults to develop good work habits and occupational skills proven to reduce recidivism and provide for healthier and safer communities. The implementation plan identifies the appropriate steps necessary to implement changes.

The first recommended action is to obtain your Board's approval to implement the 35 recommendations, included in the Comprehensive Education Reform Committee's report that are necessary to dramatically reform education programs for minors in the County's probation camps and juvenile halls and emerging adults (18-25 year olds) under Probation's care and custody. The Committee's recommendations and the preliminary implementation action plan focus on improving education services at probation camp facilities because on the average, minors spend more time at camps than in the halls (four months in comparison to 19 days), and are consistent with the Department's effort to implement best and evidence-based practices at the camps.

Upon your Board's direction, my office, the Chief Probation Officer, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Superintendent of Schools will finalize a comprehensive, long-term implementation action plan consistent with these recommendations and report back to your Board within 60 days, including the estimated

fiscal impact as well as the proposed outcomes and performance indicators associated with the recommendations.

### **Key Educational Reform Issues**

The following are key issues to be addressed as part of the comprehensive educational reform:

- Educational responsibilities
- Assessments and case planning
- Instructional programs and delivery
- Special education
- Number of regular teachers
- Classrooms and equipment
- Educational funding

Please refer to the Comprehensive Educational Reform Report (Attachment I) for a detailed description of each issue.

### **Vision of Comprehensive Education Reform**

As probationers enter the juvenile justice system, it is clear that many have been neglected for years, are educationally disadvantaged, and one-third or more have specific learning disabilities or other special education needs. Consequently, as noted in the report, some of the key visions are to have:

- An instructional program that is not only accredited but includes high expectations and educational standards and outcomes for all students, so that youth are well equipped to succeed in school, at work, and in life. The Committee identified four educational pathways to accomplish this purpose.
- The delivery of educational services to youth in the County's juvenile halls and camps based on comprehensive assessments of their criminogenic, educational, health, and mental health needs and case plans, including individual learning plans (ILPs) for educational services that are customized to address each student's strengths, needs, and responsivity issues. It is also necessary to have seamless case management services.
- The provision of adequate special education services, in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, including timely assessments of specific learning disabilities or other special education needs, development of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Positive Behavior Intervention Plans (PBIPs), and a continuum of services and placements to meet specific learning disabilities and other special education needs.

- A quality educational system within the juvenile halls and camps that is not just limited to the legally required 240 minutes or Board-approved policy of 300 minutes of classroom time per weekday, but is part of case plans that are the “whole cloth” for improving the development of youth during and after their stays in juvenile halls and/or camps. Because all minors have a right to an opportunity for obtaining a quality life-long education, this should not be diminished by the circumstances of their detention in one of the juvenile facilities.

### **Expectations as a Result of Educational Reform**

The Committee has developed a comprehensive vision of educational reform and key issues and recommendations for each of the areas of the Report. Full implementation of the recommendations will provide youth and emerging adults (18-25 year olds) with opportunities to:

- Receive comprehensive assessments of their criminogenic, educational, health, and mental health needs.
- Receive case plans including ILPs or IEPs for educational services that are customized to address their needs, strengths, and responsivity issues.
- Have access to and counseling for one or more of the following four educational pathways based on their strengths, interests, abilities, motivation, and achievement levels:
  1. Obtaining a high school diploma and passing the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE);
  2. Obtaining a General Education Development (GED) certificate;
  3. Completing Career Technical Education (CTE) or vocational educational (VE) programs in camp for preparation of formal apprenticeships and/or employment in the community; and/or
  4. Have opportunities to attend two or four-year colleges.

All four of the preceding educational pathways are intended to provide avenues for youth and emerging adults to acquire the education needed to obtain gainful employment and to become productive members of their communities.

- Benefit from the County’s continuing and expanded commitment to improving the literacy of both juvenile and emerging adult probationers.
- Having timely access to special education assessments and a full continuum of services and placements to address the specific learning disabilities and other special education needs, identified in IEPs, that seem to be quite prevalent among these youth and emerging adults.

- Have access to quality classrooms, educational materials, computer equipment, and other technologies that facilitate interactive learning by doing (Learning Style 3), as well as more traditional classroom instruction (Learning Style 2) that emphasize lecture, reading assignments, other homework, and testing.
- Have access to quality career technical educational and vocational education programs that prepare youth and emerging adults in various areas including formal apprenticeships and/or employment in the construction trades, media production, and culinary arts to earn a living and thereby support themselves and their families.
- Have access to both classroom and after-school tutors and mentors that provide these youth and emerging adults with nurturing support that many have been missing for all or most of their young lives.
- Receive updated case plans and integrated transition services to help these youth and emerging adults move from juvenile halls and camps back to their families and communities.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding**

The Probation Department and LACOE have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Attachment VI) stating that both parties agree to work collaboratively to implement the aforementioned education reform recommendations. Specifically, the MOU calls for (a) monthly on-site meetings of the Probation Department and LACOE line staff to address and resolve educational service delivery issues; (b) have periodic executive meetings between the Chief Probation Officer, LACOE Superintendent, and key staff from both agencies to address and resolve larger implementation issues; and (c) provide joint quarterly progress reports to the Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles County Board of Education. In addition, the Probation Department and LACOE are developing a "report card" that can be used to inform your Board and the Los Angeles County Board of Education on the progress being made in executing the MOU.

#### **Recommendation for Additional Ordinance and Budgeted Positions**

As a result of the Comprehensive Educational Reform effort, the Probation Department is requesting the following three (3) ordinance and budgeted positions: one (1) Senior Probation Director; one (1) Program Analyst, Probation; and one (1) Senior Secretary III. These positions are necessary to enable the Probation Department to establish a formal structure and move towards effective implementation of the recommendations. The Senior Probation Director or a County position at this level is necessary to enable the Probation Department to recruit and hire an individual to serve as a senior staff advisor to the Chief Probation Officer on education matters, to serve as the Probation Department's ombudsman on school matters for youth in the juvenile halls and camps, and to serve as the Department's chief liaison in working with LACOE management and staff in

implementing comprehensive educational reform in the juvenile halls and camps. This position will require a fully credentialed, highly-qualified education expert to report directly to the Chief Probation Officer to handle the increased workload associated with administering this highly diversified, major function. In addition, the Senior Secretary III and Program Analyst, Probation positions are necessary to provide clerical and administrative support, respectively, to the management position.

### **Recommendation to Contract with The Resources Company**

The Department is requesting Board approval to contract with TRC on a sole source basis to provide consultation and project management services related to the implementation and monitoring of the 35 education reform recommendations. TRC will also be responsible for assisting the Probation Department and LACOE in exploring and developing three (3) initiatives for improving educational services in the juvenile halls and camps and to integrate implementation of educational reform recommendations with the implementation of evidence-based treatment and other services in the halls, camps, day reporting centers, and the community.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended actions are consistent with the principles of County Strategic Plan Goal 1: Service Excellence; Goal 3: Organizational Effectiveness; Goal 5: Children and Families' Well-being; and Goal 7: Public Safety. Specifically, all four educational pathways previously identified are intended to provide avenues for youth and emerging adults to acquire a quality education needed to obtain gainful employment and to become productive members of their communities. A key goal is attaining the expectation that minors return to their school of residence if doing so is the best way to accomplish the educational objectives in their respective case plans.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The Probation Department requires \$341,000 of ongoing funding and \$280,000 of one-time funding for a total of \$621,000 for this project. For FY 2008-09, the \$621,000 Appropriation Adjustment (Attachment VII) will transfer the required appropriation from PFU to Probation's operating budget.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

On June 19, 2007, on motion of Supervisor Knabe, as amended by Supervisor Antonovich, the Board instructed the Chief Probation Officer, in collaboration with the LACOE Superintendent of Schools, Los Angeles County Board of Education, Probation Commission, County Librarian, Director of Mental Health, Children's Planning Council, the CEO, and the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council to: 1) develop a comprehensive plan to dramatically reform education programs in the County's juvenile

halls and probation camps, including an exploration of the feasibility of dependent charter schools and other innovative models of education, i.e., the expansion and enhancement of vocational schools and partnerships with community colleges; and 2) report back to the Board every 60 days with progress reports.

The Comprehensive Education Reform Committee was formed, is chaired by the Chief Probation Officer, and includes representatives from the various departments and agencies identified by your Board and other departments or agencies deemed appropriate and that expressed an interest in this effort, i.e., the Juvenile Court, Department of Children and Family Services, the Learning Rights Law Center, and the Youth Law Center. The Probation Department has submitted five 60-day progress reports to your Board which have provided an overview of the Committee's work and presentations conducted at 20 Comprehensive Education Reform Committee meetings held thus far.

#### **Legislation Needed to Revamp Current JCCS Funding Model**

The Committee recommends that the County support LACOE's desire to seek legislation to revamp the current funding of Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS), which is based on average daily attendance in the juvenile halls and camps, to one that is based on a residential service delivery model and reflects the total costs of providing educational services in the juvenile halls and camps throughout the County.

#### **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

As previously indicated, authorization is being recommended for the Chief Probation Officer to prepare, negotiate, and execute a sole source contract substantially similar to Attachment IV with TRC, upon approval as to form by County Counsel, to provide assistance to the Probation Department for implementing the comprehensive educational reform recommendations. Consistent with your Board's revised February 6, 2008, Sole Source Contracts Policy, a completed Sole Source Checklist is provided in Attachment V.

In addition, the Probation Department and LACOE intend to submit a final implementation action plan within 60 days contingent on your Board's approval of the Comprehensive Educational Reform Report.

#### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES**

Approval of the Committee's recommendations and implementation of the preliminary action plan will enhance opportunities for youth in our juvenile halls and camps to become more engaged in their education by having multiple pathways available that emphasize the value of work and help youth and emerging adults develop good work habits and occupational skills which are proven to reduce recidivism and provide for healthier and safer communities.

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**CONCLUSION**

The Comprehensive Educational Reform Report and its supporting documents provide a vision of an effective educational system in our juvenile halls and camps, and that the short term, preliminary implementation action plan includes appropriate steps to dramatically reform education programs for the minors in the County's juvenile halls and probation camps and emerging adults under Probation's care and custody. The Committee will continue to work on a comprehensive, long-term implementation action plan and will report back to your Board within 60 days.

Respectfully submitted,



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:SRH:RDC  
RBT:yjf/llm

**Attachments (7)**

- c: Honorable Michael Nash, Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court
- Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
- Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
- Raymond G. Fortner, Jr., County Counsel
- Wendy Watanabe, Acting Auditor-Controller
- Dr. Darline P. Robles, Superintendent, Los Angeles County Office of Education
- Leslie K. Gilbert-Lurie, President, Los Angeles County Board of Education
- Clay Hollopeter, President, Probation Commission
- Margaret Todd, County Librarian
- Dr. Marvin J. Southard, Director, Department of Mental Health
- Cheryl Mendoza, Executive Director, Children's Planning Council
- Jose Huizar, Chair, Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council
- Trish Ploehn, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
- Judy Hammond, Public Information Officer, Chief Executive Office